

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Week 2 of Earthquake Preparedness Month Campaign Focuses  
on Preparing Schools**

From kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, California's schools and the children in them are getting ready to ride out the next big quake. That is the focus this next week, as the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual California Earthquake Preparedness Month campaign focuses on school preparedness for earthquakes and other potential emergencies.

"The '94 Northridge temblor showed that strong ground shaking can significantly impact educational institutions," said Dallas Jones, Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), which coordinates the statewide preparedness campaign. "Even though no school building collapsed in the Northridge quake, more than 700 schools were temporarily closed.

"Falling contents, light fixtures and other nonstructural elements caused most of the disruptions. However, a larger quake, could force even more schools to suspend operations for several weeks."

Jones cited the elimination or reduction of potential interior hazards as an effective starting point.

"Time after time, falling objects inside buildings cause more injuries than anything else," added Jones. He suggests coating windows with safety film, bolting bookcases to wall studs, restraining shelf contents and securing overhead light fixtures to help prevent injuries to students, faculty and staff.

During this second week of the campaign, OES is asking school officials at every level to look beyond the classroom in their preparedness and mitigation efforts.

***Recent California Quake Activity***

**Between March 29 (0900 hrs.) and April 5 (0900 hrs.), California experienced more than 150 earthquakes. Of those, two were greater than magnitude 3.0.** View a map of recent quakes at <http://quake.wr.usgs.gov/recenteqs/latest.htm>

3.5 4/02 (7 mi) E of Borrego Springs

3.0 04/05 (7 mi) WNW of Punta Gorda

“We must take steps to ensure that our gyms, auditoriums, and other school facilities are able to withstand the next major quake,” Jones said. “Many students participate in and attend extracurricular activities in these locations and there buildings cannot be overlooked.

“Additionally, in higher education, the safety of dormitories, university-owned apartments and other buildings used for student, faculty and staff housing is equally important,” he added.

Jones suggested that school officials work directly with their students and the community to address needed preparedness measures. He suggested that this week provides an opportunity to involve the entire community in preparedness efforts at home, work and school.

“Students can help by identifying hazards in their classrooms; parents with carpentry, engineering and other skills can help reduce the hazards; and neighborhood merchants can help by donating or discounting supplies that are needed.

Additional earthquake preparedness information and details about California Earthquake Preparedness Month Campaign events are available at the OES “*Ready to Ride it Out*” Web site at [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov).

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